THE

PRESENT

STATE OF IRELAND,

AND

THE ONLY MEANS OF PRESERVING HER

TO

THE EMPIRE,

CONSIDERED.

IN A

Letter to the Marquis Cornwallis.

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Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt.

London:

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, PICCADILLY.

1799.

[*Price* 1*s.* 6*d.*]

THE

PRESENT STATE,

&c.

MY LORD,

PULCHRUM *eſt bene facere reipublicæ, etiam bene dicere haud abſurdum eſt*, is the obſervation of the eloquent hiſtorian, who has tranſmitted to us the details of that flagitious conſpiracy which once menaced the Roman name, and which the vigilance and patriotiſm of the chief magiſtrate detected and defeated.

Your Excellency may perceive with what application the opinion and authority of the illuſtrious Roman can be urged in this addreſs. The arduous ſituation in which

you have been placed by your appointment to the government of Ireland, may bear ſome likeneſs to that of the diſtinguiſhed conſul, whom the Roman writer has recorded as the father of his country. In an hour of extraordinary danger and conſternation, armed like him with ſupreme authority, *ne quid detrimenti reſpublica capiat*, you have effected the public ſafety; but without violation of the law, or departure from the duties of humanity. In this your Excellency, without vanity, might claim, and Truth herſelf muſt recogniſe your ſuperiority to the Roman magiſtrate. The late conſpiracy in Ireland, for extent, ſyſtem, and preparation, has no parallel in the confederacy of Catiline. They may reſemble in boldneſs of deſign, and flagitiouſneſs of means; but their difference is incalculable, when we compare the two æras which are ſtained with their enormities, and contraſt the darkneſs of paganiſm with the light of chriſtianity. The face of human ſociety is conſiderably varied ſince the days of Cicero; the arts of life have been ſince perfected; navigation and commerce have connected and civilized the nations of the earth; a complete interchange of wiſdom has every where educated

cated the minds, and ſoftened the manners of men; the principles of government are brought to a juſt theory, whoſe great end is the happineſs of the people; and a wiſe and extended policy has ariſen in Europe, whoſe end is the ſecurity and independence of ſeparate ſtates, by an equalization of power, which, like the preſſure on the parts of a fluid when equal and general, ſuſtains the whole in tranquillity.

The ſyſtem of morals introduced by chriſtianity, and interwoven in the frame of civilized ſtates, has diffuſed the pureſt and moſt exalted notions of morality. Conſidering theſe, and the many important diſcoveries and improvements of modern times, the late tranſactions in Ireland fill us with aſtoniſhment, and lead the philoſophic obſerver to deep and ſerious reflection. From your conduct, my Lord, at all times in the ſervice of your ſovereign, and the zeal and promptitude with which you obeyed his late commands in aſſuming the government of a conſiderable part of his dominions, in a ſeaſon the moſt difficult and trying, when the powers of ordinary men are found inadequate to the great emergencies which ariſe; and

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when your Lordſhip's refuſal would have ſtood juſtified by your long and important ſervices, and the claims of that period of life, to which you have happily arrived: from theſe, my Lord, and the experience of ſuperior wiſdom in your government, the Public are induced to hope, that, under your Lordſhip's auſpices, the victory which has been acquired, may be ſecured; that the enemy may not recover from his defeat; and that the King's faithful ſubjects in Ireland may not feel a return of calamity. Humbly to ſuggeſt to your Excellency the meaſure eſſential to produce this good, to trace the real object of the rebellion, and aſcertain the real motives of its leaders, is the deſign of this addreſs.

From the relation of the two countries, and the incorporation of their commercial and political intereſts, the tranſactions of one cannot be indifferent to the other; nor can the head of the empire view, without the deepeſt concern, the diſſenſions which continually agitate, and the miſchiefs which occaſionally deſolate a country, which, under an enlightened policy, were capable of the higheſt proſperity.

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The firſt and great duty of government which is truly parental, is, ſo to form and diſcipline the public mind by regulation and inſtitution, that it ſhall not have opportunity to err, or temptation to be vicious; to exclude the occaſion of crimes, rather than puniſh their commiſſion; that the ſubordination of the ſtate may proceed more from virtue than neceſſity. Every principle of duty which actuates a government, inculcates this particular obligation, which, as it may apply to Ireland, excluſive of its moral claim, is irreſiſtibly enjoined by the politics of England; thoſe politics which have united her at home, and made her formidable abroad. To rivet the parts of the empire in unity of will and law; to conſolidate their ſtrength and intereſts; to multiply the energy, and augment the reſources of Great Britain, muſt be the wiſh of every Engliſhman; and can Ireland heſitate to ſhare her freedom and her glory, her talents and her induſtry, her wealth and tranquillity? In England, the prejudices of the few muſt give way to the policy of the whole; and, in Ireland, the ſad experience of misfortune muſt counteract the ſuggeſtions of pride; and inducing the people there to contemplate with ſerioufneſs the

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condition of their country, muſt inſpire them to embrace with eagerneſs, and tolerate with equanimity, ſuch conſtitutional changes as reaſon may demonſtrate to be indiſpenſible for continuing to them the bleſſings of tranquillity.

That your Excellency is well diſpoſed to promote this great meaſure, is not a matter of doubt. The public eſtimate of your character is not more flattering than juſt. A few whom faction depraves, or bigotry deludes, may deny you the praiſe which is due, and load you with invective; but the great majority of the people are ſatisfied of the rectitude of your intentions, and the wiſdom of your meaſures. The preſent occaſion is not above your talents; you have been long habituated to the duties and difficulties of government, and will not, I am perſuaded, reject without conſideration, or from want of confidence abandon an opportunity for confirming all the good you have done, and rendering the empire eſſential and permanent ſervice. Seldom, to be ſure, has Ireland a Viceroy, whoſe meaſures of government look beyond the term of his adminiſtration: to ſecure a majority

in Parliament, and tranſact the King's buſi neſs, as it is called, without clamour or oppoſition, is the whole of their efforts; but it is well known, that your Excellency went to Ireland induced neither by ambition nor emolument—a more comprehenſive and liberal policy therefore has marked, and muſt continue to characterize, your adminiſtration.

If ever the general circumſtances of the empire, or the particular ſtate of Ireland, required that her government ſhould be committed to extraordinary talents, and more than human firmneſs, it has been during the preſent ſeaſon. An active and perfidious foe has availed himſelf of every opportunity for aſſaulting the power and undermining the government of Great Britain, and civil diſſenſions have raged in Ireland, which threatened her with more danger than the wiles of the common enemy; at this juncture was your Excellency called to her government, in which your conduct has manifeſted the great qualities required for the ſituation. Many of your predeceſſors in this high office have had their ſhare of ſenſe and underſtanding; many men of good in-

tentions have filled the illuſtrious roll; but in general their love of eaſe and luxury incapacitated them for the labours of government, and enſlaved them to the views and artifices of a party, whom they came to command. This has uniformly impeded all ſcrutiny of injuſtice, and all reformation of abuſe. The adminiſtration of the Marquis of Buckingham, however, muſt be admitted as an honourable exception. This has proved the bane of Ireland. The ſtate chariot, amidſt all the changes of its poſſeſſor, has rolled the ſame way without variety or deviation; but time has impaired its ſtrength and multiplied its impediments. The moment for its reparation has arrived, or ruin threatens the chariot and its guide. In your Lordſhip the Public have found a mind above the attractions of indolence and pleaſure, too high to obey what it ſhould command, and too honeſt to neglect any of its duties. To your Excellency therefore does Ireland look for providence as to her future condition, as well as for ability, temper, and integrity, in regulating her preſent affairs.

It is ſurpriſing how much the internal concerns

concerns of Ireland are misrepresented in England, and how little is the information abroad of the real state of that country. From this ignorance has the British Cabinet proceeded blindfold in the management of Ireland; their knowledge of Irish affairs is through the medium of the Viceroy, who reports nothing from his own experience; he is the slave of pleasure, and the agent of his own servants. On his arrival in Ireland he finds an aristocracy holding the keys of Parliament, and in possession of all the great offices of state; an *imparlance* instantly takes place, and the result of this *concord* and agreement is, the Viceroy's transferring to the aristocracy all the real and virtual power of government, with the authority of the King's name, in exchange for personal repose, a polite court, and an accommodating Parliament. Hence the statements of successive Governors to the British Cabinet are all of one complexion; not a single ray of light beams on them from any quarter; all is ignorance and darkness. Besides the inertness and inactivity of the Viceroy, other causes may contribute to the want of information, as well as mismanagement of

Iriſh affairs, which it may be uſeful to examine.

Remotely ſituated as Ireland is from the fountain of her government, ſhe muſt in ſome meaſure feel the inconvenience of provincial dependency. The common ſovereign of both countries can reſide in but one; Ireland therefore, as junior and inferior, can enjoy only the reflection of the royal light. She muſt therefore, from the nature of things, be more ſubject to abuſe, and leſs likely to be redreſſed; beſides, her diſtance from the royal ear renders it neceſſary that her government ſhould be vicarious, which ſubjects her to further inconvenience. The Sovereign living in the midſt of his ſubjects has an intereſt in their happineſs, and in the peace of his kingdom, at leaſt for the term of his life; the Viceroy bounds all his views within the period of his adminiſtration only, which can continue but a few years, and which a thouſand cauſes may terminate prematurely, without reference to impropriety of conduct. The Monarch at his birth derives his duties from nature, and his whole education is how to diſcharge them; the

the Viceroy is the ſteward, whoſe rectitude is matter of accident, and whoſe intereſt contravenes his duty. The character of one is original and parental, affectionate and permanent; of the other, derivative and tutelary, ſelfiſh and fleeting. The effects of this difference in character are obvious, and are abundantly confirmed in the hiſtory of Ireland. The ſtatute of Henry the Seventh, known by the name of Poyning's Act, which made it neceſſary to tranſmit into England the ſeveral bills intended to be paſſed in the Parliament of Ireland previous to their introduction there, and to exemplify the cauſes and reaſons for holding parliament, was enacted for the ſole purpoſe of protecting the Engliſh colony from the oppreſſion and exaction of the King's repreſentative. This very act, which put the Iriſh ſettlement under the immediate protection of the Engliſh Government, and ſhielded it from the rapacity of governors, became in ſubſequent time, by a ſtrange perverſion, the object of popular odium and the ſubject of general diſſatisfaction in Ireland; the people there were taught to view in it an unjuſt control in the Britiſh Parliament, proceeding from force and

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uſurpation ; though the hiſtory of that act, and its own proviſions, demonſtrate the parental affection and benevolence of England for that country. Notwithſtanding the diſadvantage attending the exerciſe of the royal authority through the medium of a deputy in Ireland, were there any connexion between her Legiſlature and that of England, if the Engliſh Parliament had a ſuperintending power to examine and decide on the affairs of Ireland, the inconvenience of vice-regal government would hardly exiſt, more particularly if Ireland were a conſtituent of the Britiſh Parliament, and had immediate and direct acceſs to its counſels by regular repreſentation. However, at preſent ſhe has an independent and ſeparate Legiſlature, which, however it oppoſe vulgar notions, and give offence to popular prejudice, I ſhall not ſcruple to aſſert, has, under the peculiar circumſtances of Ireland, promoted rather than corrected the inconvenience of delegated government ; and has opened rather than excluded the admiſſion of abuſe, which, in ſome degree, muſt ever attend the exerciſe of power in ſituations removed from immediate inquiry and control.

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The firſt object with the Chief Governor in Ireland is to ſecure the ſupport of the Parliament, which he finds excluſively exerciſing all the powers of legiſlation. To gain the aſcendancy in that aſſembly, and complete influence over its deliberations, becomes the ſpring of all his efforts, and the application of all his power. The neceſſity for this predominance over the free agency of Parliament, produced clearly by its disjunction from that of England, creates the imbecility of the Viceroy and the ſtrength of parliamentary patronage, which ſubjects him to infinite and increaſing claims, in moſt inſtances detrimental to the Public, and diſgraceful to the King's government. Hence has prevailed in Ireland an unprecedented ſyſtem of private jobbing and intrigue, and of unqualified public venality, in contempt of all character and opinion of the country. At no period was this practice carried higher, or was leſs artifice to conceal it from the view of the Public, than during the adminiſtration of Lord Weſtmorland, whoſe conduct, whatever reprehenſion it may deſerve, derives ſome extenuation not only from the general difficulty which every Chief Governor ſuſtains in managing the

Iriſh Legiſlature, but from his meeting a conſiderable parliamentary oppoſition, and the occurrence of queſtions of a delicate and difficult nature during his government. If it be aſked, Since the conſtitutions of both countries are the ſame, and that prerogative and privilege, the rights of the King and the ſubject, are extended on the ſame policy, and defined within the ſame limit in Ireland as in England, why ſhould the King's government require extraordinary means of ſupport in Ireland? and why ſhould means be legitimated there which in England public opinion alone would render impracticable? this may be explained on general principle as well as by peculiar circumſtances in Ireland. It is more likely that the public buſineſs ſhould be leſs obſtructed, and be more eaſily tranſacted in that country, where the ſource and powers of Government are derived from the acts of its own people, where the national eſtabliſhment is of its own making in community of ſoil and birth, and where the nation has not to look beyond its own limits for the original of the counſels which direct, and the authority which maintains the public order, than in that country where the efficacy

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of government is from abroad, and whoſe origin and creation are foreign and external. In the latter it is likely that a ſecret wiſh may prevail to diſengage itſelf from this connexion, and render its government independent; and if the character of the people be impetuous and enterpriſing, turbulent and brave, and that nature has apparently ſupplied their country with the means and capacities of an independent ſtate, it is almoſt a conſequence in ſtrict argument, or at leaſt a probable inference, that a tendency ſhould exiſt, and, as opportunities favour, diſplay itſelf in open acts for effecting this ſeparation. It will appear by and by, in the review of this ſubject, how far this general reaſoning is confirmed in its application to Ireland, and whether ſhe has, at any period, omitted an opportunity of weakening her connexion with Britain. This effort to divide is a growing quantity, and muſt increaſe with the ſtrength of one country and the difficulties of the other; beſides the conſiderable addition it acquires from the progreſs of a falſe philoſophy in politics, which flatters the paſſions of men, and eſtranges them from their governments. Hence ariſes the neceſſity, on the part of

the executive, for more conſiderable influence in its adminiſtration of the dependent than of the ſuperior country.

It has been objected to the conſtitution of England, that, however admirably it has adjuſted the different powers of the ſtate in mutual freedom, as well as in neceſſary co-operation, it has not ſufficiently provided againſt an evil, which, under this fine theory, may produce deſpotiſm in practice; that the influence of the Crown is not entirely excluded from admiſſion to the Legiſlature. Finely tempered as this conſtitution is between the popular form of government and the monarchical, partaking of the freedom of the one and the energy of the other, I am free to confeſs myſelf one of thoſe who think it one of the excellencies of that government, that the royal eſtate and the branches of the legiſlature are ſo connected, that the latter are open to the influence of the former; and to this do I aſcribe the eminent ſolidity and firmneſs which, in an extraordinary manner, the Britiſh Government has manifeſted in theſe later years. In the midſt of conſpiracy at home, and an enlarged and tremendous fo-

reign war, ſhe has remained unſhaken by the ſtorm; and in the midſt of the great deluge which has lately inundated the world, has appeared the only reſting-place for religion and liberty: and the very acts of the Britiſh Parliament, which are adduced by popular prejudice, through the arts of the diſaffected, as abuſes of that influence, and as violences and injuries to the conſtitution, are the creatures of that neceſſity which the conſpiracy of the external foe and the internal traitor had created; and to the timely interpoſition of theſe ſtatutes is Great Britain, at the preſent moment, indebted for ſalvation and exiſtence.

There are ſeveral circumſtances, however, which in England limit the extent of this influence, and ſecure to the public voice a deciſive control over the adminiſtration. In Ireland there are not theſe reſtraints; and as ſhe is particularly conſtituted, her government is conſiderably leſs popular, and the influence of the executive is neceſſarily more extended and injurious, as to her interior, than in England. Since the ſeparation of the Iriſh legiſlature from that of England, and Ireland becoming ſolely competent to

direct her own internal government, no other link has remained to connect the two countries, but the influence of the Engliſh Miniſter in the Parliament of Ireland itſelf. Without this medium, it will appear that the coherence of the countries would be expoſed to inevitable danger, as a ſtrong principle of repulſion has unequivocally manifeſted itſelf in Ireland; and therefore, however it is to be regretted that the influence of the Crown in Ireland, or, more truly and properly, the name of the Crown, is made uſe of to produce and extend a ſyſtem of corrupt aſcendancy; yet it is conſolation to an Engliſh ſubject, that it is of imperative neceſſity, ariſing from cauſes for which Ireland alone is anſwerable. The conſtitutional change of 1782 in Ireland threw the executive at the mercy of her Parliament; which, as long as it has the ſole and excluſive power of legiſlation, muſt command the liberality and enjoy the munificence of the Crown. Hence uniformly in Ireland, ſince the year 1782 particularly, parliamentary intereſt has been the ſole key to the favour of the Court; all the honours and all the emoluments of the ſtate have moved in the road of Parliament, the great

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mart for their exchange. Without parliamentary ſupport, talent and virtue have been lame and impotent in Ireland; they formed no claim to diſtinction or reward: hence it has proceeded, that in general the active and valuable offices at the bar, and in the civil economy, have been filled by men whoſe talents and capacities for their ſituations were conſiderably inferior to very many of their cotemporaries. It muſt be admitted, however, that in the ſhort adminiſtration of Lord Fitzwilliam, who vainly attempted a government by virtue, pre-eminent talents and unblemiſhed reputation were raiſed to the heads of the church and the univerſity; and your Excellency's adminiſtration deſerves conſiderable praiſe for your late promotion of a prelate, whoſe learning and genius, integrity of life, and amiability of manners, do honour to your government.

The difference of extent, wealth, and importance of the two countries, appears ſtrikingly in their Parliaments. In England, charters of incorporation conferring municipal privileges, and giving the elective franchiſe, were gradually and occaſionally granted

ed by the Crown, as towns became reſpectable and populous, and as commerce and manufacture flouriſhed. Hence, notwithſtanding a few exceptions, and the effects of the generation and decay, the advancement and decline which attend every thing human, and affect communities as well as individuals, the Engliſh Houſe of Commons is at preſent near a juſt repreſentation of the great trading, manufacturing, and monied intereſts; but in Ireland, the Houſe of Commons was framed in a great meaſure with the ſole view of creating and ſecuring Proteſtant aſcendancy: its baſis was not laid in the population, wealth, and importance of the kingdom, as was the caſe in England. Without reference to theſe characters, incorporating charters iſſued ſuddenly and numerouſly, for the mere purpoſe of procuring a Proteſtant majority; and hence appears to me to be derived the real cauſe of the great inequality of repreſentation in the Iriſh Parliament: this great inequality has enabled an ariſtocracy to poſſeſs itſelf of the whole energy of Parliament, which in Ireland has been no more than the medium of its operation, and the inſtrument of its power. From the limited numbers of Commoners alſo in the

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lower Houſe of Parliament it has been leſs difficult for the ariſtocracy to engroſs ſuch an extent of borough patronage as ſhould ſecure its parliamentary ſtrength. A great inequality of property has uniformly prevailed in Ireland. The many rebellions there, with their conſequent forfeitures, and the effects of the ancient diviſion of the kingdom into numerous lordſhips and principalities, may have occaſioned the very unequal diviſion of land in Ireland. Whatever may have been its cauſes, it has generated and produced the ariſtocracy, and given it the means of parliamentary patronage.

In England, the ſtrong tendency of its government was originally ariſtocratical. The monopoly of its ſoil produced a body of nobles who ruled both the King and the people; but the enterpriſes of commerce, and the induſtry of manufacture, raiſed the order of Britiſh commoners, which checked the influence of the barons, and ſupported the royal eſtate, which is allowed to be the origin of the popular part of the Britiſh conſtitution.

The magnitude of the Engliſh trade, the extent

extent of her poſſeſſions, the qualities of her ſoil, and the faculties of her people, have produced ſuch a capital of wealth and property as completely to countervail the landed proprietary: numerous trading companies and chartered ſocieties for diverſified commerce, have eſtabliſhed ſuch a monied intereſt in England, as to make it the moſt active and important rank in the ſtate, as it reſpects the great ſinews of its power, the national finances: hence the eaſy and rapid alienation of her real property, which is ever varying its poſſeſſors. Thus the power of the Engliſh commonalty increaſes, and all ariſtocratical tendencies and effects are obviated. To acquire an eſtate becomes the ambition of the merchant; the certainty of market and of ſelling for the value, induces to alienation, and multiplies the ſellers; and whatever be the diſadvantages of the national debt, the magnitude of the public ſtocks has ſo facilitated the means, and augmented the progreſs of private wealth, as to diffuſe among the whole body of the people ſuch a maſs of homogeneous property, that all claſſes of Engliſhmen not only feel themſelves without the colliſion of oppoſite views, and the contradictions of ſeparate rights, but com-

combined and connected in one individual intereſt, the ſafety of the ſtate: but in Ireland none of thoſe cauſes have exiſted which in England have tempered the ariſtocracy, and blended it in fine proportion with the rights of the people. Her ſmall territorial extent is favourable to the growth of ariſtocracy; her inconſiderable trade, her want of capital, and the perfect infancy of the nation in all the modes of induſtry, and in all the acquiſitions of wealth, have left the ariſtocracy unbalanced. The centre of the conſtitutional ſyſtem in Ireland wanting its due poſition, the whole vacillates and totters with infirmity. Not only the abſence of a monied intereſt, and the want of a great mercantile power in Ireland, account for the inequality of her government; but a poſitive cauſe has exiſted for ariſtocratical tendency, which ſeems fully adequate to the effect.

The people of Ireland, in reſpect to their religious relation, are divided in triple proportion of Catholics to Proteſtants; and not only was the whole Catholic body, until very lately, excluded from the loweſt participation in the legiſlative and executive parts

of government; but by the operation of ſevere and impolitic penal ſtatutes were precluded from the acquiſition and enjoyment of property. It is not therefore a matter of wonder that in ſo ſmall a country as Ireland, in which three-fourths of its population were depreſſed by a weight of diſability and penalties from riſing by talent or property in the ſtate, the reſiduum of the people ſhould have the nature and effect of an ariſtocracy itſelf; that this faction ſhould be itſelf capable of further reduction; and that, by monopoly and unjuſt excluſion, an inconſiderable part may engroſs the power of the whole.

From the eaſe alſo with which in a ſmall country family connexion may ſpread itſelf, the union of powerful men becomes ſtrengthened by affinity, and conſolidated by mutual intereſt. Hence the combination of a few produces a formidable power, which in Ireland has had the maſtery in public affairs. It has been openly avowed in the Iriſh Parliament, that to break the ariſtocracy, which impeded the King's government during the adminiſtration of Lord Townſhend, coſt the nation half a million ſterling;

ling; and the kingdom was threatened with ſimilar expenſe a few years ago, when ſome parliamentary proprietors ſhewed a diſpoſition to unite their forces, and turn their ſtrength againſt the Government. Hence has proceeded the degree of corruption and the purſuit of private intereſt, to the injury of the Public, which have prevailed in Ireland; and the buſineſs of the Viceroy is hardly more than to appeaſe the importunity, and ſatisfy the cravings, of the ariſtocracy. Frauds, peculations, and abuſes of every kind, are protected from inquiry and ſecured from puniſhment. Boards of commiſſion have been multiplied beyond the neceſſity of the public buſineſs; and places have been divided and granted for life, to oblige the greater number, and make them independent of the Government: and in the ſame policy has prevailed the practice of reverſionary grants, to the injury of the ſucceeding Viceroy, and the weakening of his adminiſtration. Improvident bargains have been made with individuals in fraud to the Public; and in the ſame ſpirit of jobbing and venality the public buildings of Dublin have been raiſed on ſcites not only inconvenient, but highly ridiculous, and at immenſe ex-

penſe. Hence alſo the extravagant collection of the public revenues, and a penſion-liſt in Ireland greater than in England, and above all, the proſtitution of the peerage by actual ſale, to the injury of merit, diſhonour of the old nobility, and great odium of Government. This ſhameful practice of bringing to market the honours of the Crown, which caſts a deep ſhade on the memory of Lord Weſtmorland in Ireland, has contributed more immediately and neceſſarily to injure the public character of the Iriſh Parliament, than any other aſſignable cauſe. Under his government the Parliament called in 1790 was compoſed in an extraordinary manner; thoſe wealthy Commoners who once filled the lower Houſe, and who had either acquired borough patronage, or in whoſe families it had deſcended with their eſtates, were ennobled in the groſs, and transferred to the upper houſe of Parliament, by which means the advowſon and inheritance of the Commons became veſted in the Lords, who for that turn gave up the preſentation to the Lord Lieutenant's ſecretary. This unjuſtifiable proceeding created an unconſtitutional dependency of the popular branch of the Legiſlature on the ariſtocratical; it promoted

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and avowed a ſyſtem of parliamentary traffic completely ſufficient to diſguſt and alienate the Public; and the obvious conſequence of this innovation was not only highly increaſing the natural evil of the Iriſh government in its tendency to ariſtocracy, but, by removing from the Houſe of Commons the men of conſideration and landed property, left it to a race of adventurers who were to make their way to ſituation and fortune by ſubmiſſive and uniform ſervility to all the meaſures of the Court, or by affected patriotiſm to commence their parliamentary career in groundleſs and indiſcriminate oppoſition to the Government, and afterwards with ſhameful apoſtacy, on the attainment of office, become advocates for the meaſures they had oppoſed, and panegyriſts of the Government they had maligned. No aſſembly, however, could conduct itſelf with more public obſequiouſneſs, or uſe a higher ſtrain of adulation in all its addreſſes to the Chief Governor. This, however, is no more a proof of ſincerity in public than in private life; for ſo long ago as the adminiſtration of the unfortunate Lord Strafford, they pronounced the higheſt encomiums on his conduct, and expreſſed their extraordinary obligations to

their

their Sovereign for committing the government to ſo able and honeſt a ſervant, but a ſhort time before their ſending over to England articles of impeachment, and deputing commiſſioners to manage the proſecution of the unfortunate Earl. And ſo late as the year 1789, the very Parliament which had repeatedly and ſtrongly expreſſed its loyalty and attachment to the King's perſon, and panegyrized his Viceroy, did, on the unfortunate occurrence of his malady, change their political creed: a great majority of Parliament deſerted the cauſe of their Sovereign, and voted a public cenſure on the Chief Governor. However, as ſoon as the King's health appeared likely to be reſtored, and the powers of the ſtate to continue in the ſame hands, they became as eager to repent as they had been to offend: ſo true a criterion of human conduct is private intereſt, and ſo fallible a pledge of ſincerity is human profeſſion.

The verſatility of Parliament alſo on the Catholic queſtion was moſt glaring; the recency of this tranſaction, however, precludes the neceſſity of particular ſtatement: but the violent manner in which it reſiſted, and the

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ſervility with which it ſoon afterwards conceded the Catholic claims, was fatal to the public intereſt. It taught the people to look for redreſs of grievance, not by appeals to the Legiſlature, but in the application of their own ſtrength. Such has been the ſtate of the Iriſh Government, and ſuch the cauſes of that diſcontent which has ſo nearly been fatal to the empire.

The acknowledged independency of the Iriſh Legiſlature has prevented her concerns coming under the review of the Britiſh Parliament; and there being no public medium of communication between the two countries, ſeems to me ſufficiently to account for the ignorance which has prevailed in Britain of the real ſtate of Ireland. A conſtitution ſo generative of abuſe cannot continue; the ſyſtem of government which has prevailed in Ireland approaches to diſſolution. It is the part of wiſdom to foreſee change, and to prevent or to improve it. That ſomething muſt be now done, cannot be controverted; either the Parliament of Ireland muſt be new-faſhioned, or, as it is called, reformed, and the ariſtocracy eradicated, or ſhe muſt be committed to the Parliament

liament of England by fair and regular repreſentation. That, if the former take place, the dominion of England in Ireland muſt determine, and the two countries be ſeparated, appears to me the obvious and moſt neceſſary conſequence. This I ſhall endeavour to eſtabliſh, and to communicate the ſtrong perſuaſion I feel, by reference to the hiſtory of that country, to her late unfortunate rebellion, and the general ſtate of politics. Sure I am that Ireland will find an union with England the panacea of her diſorders, that it will convert her poverty into opulence, and her turbulence into tranquillity.

If a parliamentary reform be conceded to Ireland, no modification ſhort of a pure democratic legiſlature can have effect. To extinguiſh, not to limit, the ariſtocracy, is their great object; and the firſt act of popular aſcendancy would be the extermination of the ſuperior order, to a moral certainty; the ſecond would be the demolition of the royal eſtate, even if it had no foreign concern, but were purely and ſolely exerciſeable within the kingdom. From the preſent ſtate of the public mind, in its long

fermented diſſatisfaction with its Parliament, and from the political impreſſions which it has received from the American war and the French revolution, it is beyond doubt that if the frame of Parliament be once innovated, it will be rent from its very foundation, the whole efforts of the people would be directed to the eſtabliſhing of a democracy, and by every poſſible barrier to exclude the influence of England and her counſels from the affairs of Ireland; for, the hiſtory of the late rebellion, as it is ſpread upon parliamentary record, and of the proceedings of the diſcontented and diſaffected in Ireland for ſome years, preparatory to their coming to open war with the Government, eſtabliſh it to the conviction of every man, that ſeparation from England was the prime and the grand object; a reform in the Parliament of Ireland was to be the means, and the deciſive ſtep towards the attainment of the former: a more equal repreſentation of the people, therefore, reſounded on every ſide, as the demand of the nation upon its Government. Under this ſpecious pretext was concealed the hoſtile diſpoſition towards Great Britain. The body of the people looked no farther than

the mere queſtion of reform, which the general conduct of Parliament appeared to render not only reaſonable but neceſſary; but its real end, and the great ſcheme of change and independence, were reſerved to a few, and lurked in the dark receſſes of conſpiracy and treaſon, until the fulneſs of time and the ſucceſs of the auxiliary meaſures ſhould call for the open avowal of the great object, and its publication to the nation. Thus the raſhneſs of the unthinking and the faith of the credulous are ever expoſed to the ſubtlety of the wicked, who enliſts them as inſtruments of his cauſe and accomplices in his crimes.

That the connexion between the two countries has been weakened, and that the public conduct of Ireland has, upon ſome great occaſions, facilitated and promoted the means of ſeparation, will appear from the particular conſideration and effect of two remarkable inſtances, independent of the general review of her hiſtory. In the year 1782, a conſtitutional change was effected in Ireland, the moſt important which had occurred ſince her annexation to Great Britain: before that period, ſhe formed a

more immediate and connected member of the Britiſh empire, under the direct influence and care of the general government. The regulations of her interior, as well as her external relations, were matter on which the Engliſh Parliament might act; and the power in the Government of England, as well of original approbation of the general meaſure, as of its final ſanction in detail, protected the people of Ireland from the miſconduct and abuſes of its own Parliament. This direct and open control of the Engliſh Government over the affairs of Ireland, the dependency of the Iriſh army on the Engliſh mutiny act, and the limited capacity and circumſcribed authority of the Iriſh Parliament, neceſſarily connected and preſerved Ireland, in conjunction with Great Britain. During this time, notwithſtanding the meaſured and ſubordinate power of the Iriſh Parliament, it was more reſpectably conſtituted than ever it has been ſince. It was compoſed almoſt entirely of men of fortune, whoſe ſituations did not expoſe them to the proſtitution of public character, nor chalk out a line of perſonal aggrandiſement through the windings of political intrigue, at the public expenſe: Ire-

land did not then feel the great financial preſſure which the neceſſity of parliamentary purchaſe has ſince created; ſhe then knew nothing of that common ſpeculation which ſince has filled the benches of Parliament with numerous and ſucceſſive adventurers; and Ireland was then equally ignorant of the market for nobility, and that extenſive and extravagant ſyſtem of influence which kept the voice and wants of the Public unheard and unheeded. But in 1782 the great link of empire which connected the two countries gave way, and nothing remained after the renunciation of the Britiſh Parliament to ſecure the union of the crowns, but the covered and fatal medium of ſecret influence in the eſtabliſhment of an expenſive and growing patronage to counteract the acquired independence and improved capacity of the Iriſh Parliament. The cauſes of this extraordinary occurrence, the ſtate of the public mind in Ireland at that time, and the means by which this great conſtitutional change was effected, ſhall be briefly ſtated, that the whole deſign and full intentions of thoſe who moved and led the politics of Ireland may be diſcloſed and made manifeſt.

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The war with America had produced conſiderable effects, not only in the Britiſh empire, but through Europe: it threw a falſe and deluſive glare over modern politics, inſtead of a ſober and ſalutary light. Hence ſome have derived the convulſions of France, and the meteor which has ſcared and diſtracted Ireland. It is certain, however, that the peculiar nature of the conteſt between Britain and her colonies provoked every where, and eminently in Ireland, much diffuſed converſation and general diſcuſſion on the principles of government. Perhaps at no time, not even at the revolution of 1688, were the abſtract rights of the people more fully examined, or the general theory of civil eſtabliſhments more accurately analyſed; and it is certain that the inſtitution of the tranſ-atlantic empire, under the circumſtances and manner of its original, has given new character and complexion to the politics of Europe: of theſe politics Ireland had in a great degree partaken. The nature of her connexion with England, the ſtate of her Parliament, and the national obſcurity, were topics which engroſſed the public attention, and on which the talents of the ſtate were employed.

employed. It need not be inquired, what was the reſult of the public inveſtigation on the queſtion, whether actual force of arms, acquiſition in war, or real or implied compact, was the foundation of the Engliſh dominion in Ireland. To argue againſt the pride or intereſt of your adverſary, is as vain among nations as among individuals. A diſcuſſion of this queſtion would be now irrelevant; the preſent occaſion calls for no ſuch inquiry; a temperate, diſpaſſionate, and calm conſideration of the preſent ſtate of Ireland, with the light reflected from her hiſtory, and her late tranſactions alone, is neceſſary at this important moment. In the American war, armed in her own defence againſt the common enemy, Ireland ſeized the favourable opportunity of her own ſtrength, and the imbecility of England, to confirm by deciſive acts thoſe argumentative concluſions, which to her mind had refuted the claims and rights of England, and eſtabliſhed her own title to independence; to diſſolve all other connexion than with the crown of Great Britain; became the great object of Ireland, for which ſhe prepared to make every effort, and apply her whole force. In the criſis of miniſterial weakneſs,

weakneſs, the great conceſſion was made. After a mighty amputation of empire, it ſeemed prudent by any means to preſerve the remainder; and England not only yielded the future independence of Ireland, but, in her ſtate of dureſs and neceſſity, renounced her former title: ſhe remitted the poſſeſſion, and confeſſed herſelf a diſſeiſor. The fatal conſequences which followed the denial to America of ſharing the Britiſh conſtitution, hurried the Engliſh miniſter into compliance with the demands of Ireland, in their full and unlimited extent. Had he been guided by true policy, and had he ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed the caſe of Ireland from that of America, the neceſſity of the preſent diſcuſſion would not have ariſen, nor ſhould the Public have been troubled with this addreſs.

The tranſaction in 1782 is thus particularly dwelt on, becauſe it furniſhes a clear demonſtration that the conſtitutional change which was demanded and effected, was not becauſe it was the moſt ſuited to the neceſſities of Ireland, but becauſe the Iriſh nation had been inflamed by every art to view the connexion with England as injurious to her honour and detractive of her national

national character. The object was more to ſhake off the dependency of the kingdom on the Engliſh Legiſlature, than any enlarged view of the future intereſts of Ireland. It was a queſtion of pride more than of policy, and it is not the character of pride to reſpect its real intereſts.

The full principle of the conſtitutional change of 1782 became the baſis of a moſt important tranſaction in 1789, at the lamentable period of the King's indiſpoſition. The *patriots* in Ireland, and the great movers of her *politics*, on this occaſion gave full ſcope to their zeal for the *unity* of the Britiſh empire, and their attachment to its *combined intereſts:* they contended, that, on the intermiſſion of the royal functions, Ireland, as an imperial independent nation, was excluſively competent to provide for this emergency; that the two countries had no other union than in their executive; and therefore, that in every poſſible caſe of its ſuſpenſion or determination, the Parliament of Ireland alone was adequate to the great imperial duty of ſupplying the vacant power. By a free election of a royal fiduciary, to hold the King's prerogative in truſt for them-

themſelves only, under ſuch limitations as they ſhould define its exerciſe; and indeed the argument went the whole length of eſtabliſhing, that, on ſuch an occaſion, the Parliament of Ireland might take the executive into their own hands, or altogether diſcontinue the royal eſtate. And had it not been for the accidental ſympathy of the parliamentary oppoſition in both countries, this abſtract argument would probably have had a deciſive practical effect in the delegation of the royal authority to a regent not deriving under the Parliament of England: in which event an actual ſeparation muſt have taken place, as there would not have remained a particle of connexion between the two countries. Their conduct, however, and proceedings, on this trying occaſion, demonſtrate the danger which threatens the empire: it eſtabliſhes the tendency of Ireland to ſeparation; and that on the preſent conſtitutional footing of theſe kingdoms no barrier is formed to prevent its effect. It is clear alſo, that, without ſeeking for it, an opportunity may ariſe again of vacancy in the Crown, or its intermiſſion; that Ireland may again feel herſelf called upon to exerciſe the imperial right by the ſpontaneous occur-

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rence of public circumſtances, without any arbitrary or uncalled for diſcuſſion of her right; and it is manifeſt, that, on ſuch an occaſion, her conduct would not be regulated by the intereſts and policy of the empire. The parliamentary report of the late rebellion alſo proves inconteſtibly, that, ſince the year 1789, the principle of ſeparation has gained rapidly, that it has wonderfully increaſed under the mere influence of general political impreſſion made by the French revolution, without the actual interference of the French government in the affairs of Ireland, the intrigues of her emiſſaries, or her ſyſtematic and authorized abominations. And the conduct of the Iriſh Parliament in 1789 ſhows, that the influence of England in the Iriſh Legiſlature, through the medium of its patronage, forms a very frail and precarious combination. The ſhameful tergiverſation of the Iriſh members, at that time, muſt convince that the honour of individuals is no ſecurity on which to repoſe the ſtrength and happineſs of the Britiſh empire.

From the firſt records of her hiſtory, Ireland has been particularly and ſpecially diſtin-

diſtinguiſhed for domeſtic diſſenſion and diviſion. Before her connexion with England, during her old government, if the term be not much abuſed in this application of it, the kingdom was ſubjected to numerous principalities and authorities, which carried on with each other inceſſant and implacable wars. The wildneſs of uncorrected nature marked the face of the country: as ſavagery unſoftened and unhumanized their manners and practices in war, traces of hoſtile incurſion were every where manifeſt; and plains, to which Nature had not denied fertility, mouldered into bogs and moraſſes. In the violence of civil ſtrife, no peaceful improvement could be effected. In the diviſion of governments there was nothing national; and thence, as all things ſublunary tend to degeneracy and decay, unleſs ſuſtained and recruited by collateral aid, the want of culture deteriorated the ſoil, as the abſence of civil diſcipline ſtill farther brutalized the national manners.

On the arrival of the Britons in Ireland, in the year 1172, every thing manifeſted to them a country deeply ſunk in the miſery of ignorance and barbariſm. Before the con-

nexion with England, therefore, neither commerce nor manufacture could have exiſted, or any one work of public utility been deviſed or executed; and ſince that connexion, though in that great length of time Ireland has naturally improved in many important reſpects, and that this improvement has ariſen entirely from her communication with England, and in its direct proportion; yet, in every period almoſt has ſhe had her tranquillity interrupted by general rebellion or local riſings, and has ever been the prey of civil and religious diſſenſions. This continual diſturbance and uncertainty of the public condition in Ireland has counteracted her natural advantages, and prevented that enlarged intercourſe with England, which would have extended her trade, and aſſimilated the national manners to the ſobriety and ſubordination of the Engliſh character. The truth of theſe poſitions will appear eſtabliſhed by the following brief review of the Iriſh hiſtory.

Henry the Second acquired the dominion of Ireland as much by his high reputation for juſtice as a king and wiſdom as a legiſlator, as by the terror of his arms. The pira-

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tical depredations of the Iriſh on his Engliſh ſubjects, their cruel treatment of priſoners of war, and the military levies which his enemy the French King was enabled to make in Ireland, conſiderably induced the Engliſh monarch to ſanction with his own authority and preſence the private adventures of his ſubjects. It is remarkable, that the ſame policy ſhould ſo ſtrongly apply at this day for permanently uniting and preſerving that which Henry the Second thought it ſo neceſſary to acquire. The politic piety of the times juſtified this expedition of Henry by a papal bull, conſecrating the title of conqueſt for the great ends of civilization and religion. Almoſt all the native princes, who were very numerous, ſubmitted to the King, did homage, and took the oaths of fidelity and allegiance. Voluntary ſubmiſſions, however, were not more effectual and ſincere at that time than they are now. The Engliſh colony planted in Leinſter was ſubject to every kind of outrage, and the utmoſt cruelty characterized its barbarous enemies: their continual aggreſſions, and the commotions of the country, determined the unfortunate Richard the Second on two royal voyages to Ireland. The force with which he was attended

tended in his firſt, ſpread terror and conſternation; ſo that, as the hiſtorians of theſe times obſerve, the Iriſh had recourſe to a policy, which they often practiſed with ſucceſs, to divert the blow which they could not ſuſtain. With feigned acknowledgments of paſt tranſgreſſions and inſincere aſſurances for the future, all the powerful leaders of the Iriſhry waited upon the King at his arrival, with ſubmiſſion and fealty; and the Earl Marſhal was empowered by ſpecial commiſſion to receive homage and repetitions of fidelity from the Iriſhry of Leinſter, which they rendered on their knees, and were afterwards admitted to the kiſs of peace; and in like manner the King himſelf received the ſubmiſſion of Ulſter. However, as ſoon as Richard had departed, and the military force was diſſolved, this humility was renounced, and, in violation of ſacred engagements, the public peace was again interrupted, and the borders of the Engliſh pale again ſuffered the ravages of war.

It is obſervable, that this perfidious quality, which ſurmounts all religious barrier, and violates all ſocial principle, has continued characteriſtical of the lower Iriſh to this hour.

hour. In the late rebellion, an enlightened and merciful policy proclaimed pardon and protection; but the very wretches who availed themſelves of the benignity of Government, in many inſtances, have ſince been apprehended in the commiſſion of new crimes, and the perpetration of greater enormities. So permanent muſt be the qualities of men, to whom the improvements of life do not deſcend, and whoſe political place debars them from any ſhare in the general civilization.

From the reign of Richard the Second to that of Elizabeth was one continued ſeries of diſturbance; but in her reign the moſt formidable and dangerous rebellion occurred of any ſince the reduction of Ireland. The rebels having had the aid of foreign power, the Spaniards effected a landing in Kinſale, and their ſtandard was ſoon joined by ſeveral of the Iriſh Lords, particularly by the Earls Tyrone and Tyrconnell, who had marched from the North at the head of a conſiderable army; but being engaged by the Lord Deputy Mountjoy, were entirely defeated. The Spaniards ſubmitted on the terms of leaving the kingdom; and the rebellious

Lord Tyrone experienced the ſame merciful indulgence, which, to the immortal honour of Great Britain, has continued to this day her peculiar character, and to which your Excellency's conduct from the commencement of your government has given the ſtrongeſt atteſtation. Lord Tyrone was received to ſubmiſſion and mercy; and in 1606, King James iſſued a commiſſion of grace for confirming the poſſeſſions of the Iriſh againſt all claims of the Crown ariſing from the attainder of thoſe concerned in the rebellion. From this royal clemency and moſt gracious favour, a perfect ſettlement of the kingdom might have been expected, as no ſmall foundation ſeems to have been laid for the return of general tranquillity. However, nothing could reduce to ſocial order and ſubordination minds ſo ferocious and intractable: for at that very time, and after all this conceſſion from the Crown and impunity for rebellion, theſe ſame Earls Tyrone and Tyrconnell, and almoſt all the Iriſhry of Ulſter, were engaged in a new conſpiracy to provoke a general riſing, ſeize the caſtle of Dublin; and, for the accompliſhment of theſe nefarious purpoſes, had actually ſolicited foreign aid. The ſame

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Providence, however, which at this day preſerves and favours the Britiſh empire, defeated this conſpiracy.

A ſurpriſing parallel runs through all the tranſactions of the Iriſh hiſtory, which ſeem to partake the ſame ſpirit, and continue the ſame character. The trial of Henry and John Shears, convicted in July laſt, records a ſcheme of treaſon wonderfully ſimilar, though more artfully laid and more extenſively diffuſed. In both, the firſt ſacrifice of rebellion was to be the King's repreſentative and council; the Engliſh miniſters and all the ſupporters of Engliſh councils were to be devoted to the fury of the mob, and become the firſt victims for eſtabliſhing the acquired independence.

The rebellious Lords having fled beyond ſea, made violent complaints abroad, that they had been driven from home for matter of religion, and with great injuſtice as to their claims and pretenſions; on which the King thought proper to make a declaration, which was publiſhed through Europe. But in the late rebellion, the full and free confeſſions of the principal traitors have prevented the ſucceſsful repeti-

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tion of this artifice. Beſides the convictions and outlawries had againſt the actors in theſe rebellions, there was a general attainder by the ſtatute of the 11th of King James, by which 500,000 acres of land in the north of Ireland were forfeited to the Crown, which enabled the King to make that Proteſtant plantation in Ulſter which has become the ſeat of the only manufacture in Ireland, and continues to be diſtinguiſhed in a very great degree above the reſt of the kingdom for its induſtry, wealth, and population, though in quality of ſoil much below the average fertility of the kingdom: a plain and irrefragable proof of the advantage which Ireland has derived from her connexion with England, to whom, whatever improvement ſhe has acquired ſince the days of her King Dermot, muſt certainly be referred: which obſervation appears to be juſtified ſtill farther, by the ſuperior order and improvement of the hither coaſt of Ireland to the farther. The weſtern diviſion of Ireland is more purely Iriſh, which may have proceeded from the policy of Cromwell, who forced the ancient and native families to reſidence beyond the Shannon; and though thoſe parts of Ireland, originally of Engliſh ſettlement, were perhaps the

moſt diſloyal and diſaffected in the late rebellion, yet it muſt be remembered, that colonial eſtabliſhments but ſeldom have had the merit of filial gratitude; and though the north of Ireland partook largely of the late conſpiracy, yet ſhe preſerved her tranquillity in a much greater degree than the zeal and ardour of the rebel leaders to make her the great reſervoir of treaſon gave foundation to expect: nor was her conduct in the midſt of the rebellion ſtained with thoſe enormities which were committed in the other parts of the kingdom; and which, for the honour of humanity, and pity for that unfortunate nation, ought not to be particularly ſtated: but it is matter of duty to read to the world the great leſſon of misfortune and puniſhment which are ſure to follow the commiſſion of crimes.

It may be further obſerved, with reſpect to the north of Ireland, that the circumſtances of her proſperity and her ſuperior opulence formed the temptation for her ſeduction; that the leſs important parts of the kingdom might more eaſily take the example of infidelity. The religious perſuaſion alſo which prevails in the North having pe-

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culiar partiality to republicaniſm, facilitated and prediſpoſed that country to meaſures which manifeſtly tended to gratify their favourite principle.

From the rebellion of Tyrone until the year 1641, Ireland appeared to have enjoyed general tranquillity; the intereſts which divided, and the animoſities which irritated, the different deſcriptions of her inhabitants, appeared to have ſubſided, and to have been ſucceeded by union, fraternity, and peace. The new poſſeſſors of lands had diligently applied to their cultivation, and the much calumniated adminiſtration of Lord Strafford had made great progreſs in the general improvement of the kingdom: theſe appearances, however, were deluſive; more extenſive miſchief was in preparation, which the intermiſſion of actual hoſtility gave leiſure to improve and mature.

Among the reaſons and cauſes which are aſſigned for this rebellion, is the great change of property which had taken place in Ulſter after the forfeitures of the ſix counties under the act of James; and probably in the relentleſs temper of the Iriſh, the jealouſy of

property

property which they had forfeited was peculiarly inveterate. The aſcendancy of Proteſtantiſm and the Engliſh intereſt, which each defeat had promoted, were without doubt the great and leading cauſes of the rebellion of 1641, which, for indiſcriminate and ſhocking murders, had no precedent. The unfortunate ſituation of the Engliſh monarch, the diſaffection of his parliament, and particularly the ſucceſsful rebellion of his ſubjects in North Britain, gave occaſion and opportunity to the execution of the deſign. The Iriſh leaders ſaw clearly that a favourable moment had arrived for terminating the Engliſh dominion in Ireland; and that one great effort, no matter in what way, would give emancipation to their country. The embarraſſment of the King's government, and the diſpoſition of the Britiſh Parliament, augmenting inſtead of removing public diſorder, gave confidence to the cauſe, and inſpired high hopes of eaſy and rapid victory. The deſign, however, againſt the capital was diſcovered; the firſt object of the rebels failed, but through the kingdom a maſſacre commenced too horrid to be dwelt upon.

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The forts and garriſon towns were aſſailed, and the kingdom was ſhaken to its centre. The reſtitution of property, the domination of the Catholic religion, and deliverance from Engliſh ſupremacy, were the great and ſacred objects which were to ſanctify, by their attainment, the wickedneſs of the means. Such were the inducements to lead, and ſuch the hopes to animate the family of the ancient proprietor, the ignorant and bigotted crowd, and the numerous claſs of Lords and Princes who delighted in the ambition, but felt not the miſeries of private war. The idea ſucceſsfully propagated at that time among the body of the people, was the danger of their religion; they were made to believe that the Engliſh Parliament had determined on the abolition of Popery in Ireland, and that the Scots were to be the zealous inſtruments of this perſecution. There was no foundation for this alarm; the ignorance, credulity, and ſuperſtition of the lower Iriſh, made it unneceſſary: they were already diſpoſed to the moſt unfavourable ſuſpicions of thoſe whom, under the influence of long and ſyſtematic deluſion, they had been made to conſider as enemies. The

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aſcendancy of Preſbyterianiſm, and the influence of the Scots, at that time gave colour and pretext to the fears and inſinuations which the deceiver was every where ſuggeſting. The moſt violent animoſities raged between the churches of Rome and Scotland, which confirmed every fear, and magnified every danger which the credulity of one might apprehend from the fanaticiſm of the other. The diviſions between theſe bodies of men in doctrine and affection were extreme, inveterate, and implacable: ſo wonderfully does man pervert the beneficence of his God in educing diſcord, and creating differences, from the very religion which came from heaven to harmonize and unite. The leaders found in this prejudice of the people the direct key to inſurrection, which at this hour locks up the minds of the lower Iriſh, or opens them to rebellion. The leaders of the late conſpiracy adopted the clue of their predeceſſors in 1641, and with the ſame fatal effect. After this great lapſe of time, the common people in Ireland are found equally credulous and bigotted; they were made lately to believe, that the Catholic religion was in imminent danger, and that its perſecution impended from that government, which, ſince

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the acceſſion of the King; has breathed the mildeſt influence on ſectaries of every denomination, and which has not only tolerated the Catholic ſubject, but removed the reſtraints of former times, and given him conſtitutional rank.

The Preſbyterian not having now aſcendancy in the ſtate, and being fraternized with the Catholic, the artifice of 1641 could not be repeated; ſome new object therefore was to alarm, ſome new enemy to be ſuggeſted; and the common people of Ireland were impreſſed with conviction that certain ſocieties which aroſe in the North, and afterwards were formed through the kingdom for the protection of their families and properties, had been actually commiſſioned by the Government to put down the Catholic faith; under which pretence, and moſt wicked and groundleſs inſinuation, were the Catholics raiſed, as it were, to protect their altars from profanation, and aſſail the public authority by force of arms. It muſt be remembered alſo, that as the misfortunes of Charles the Firſt, and the diſtractions of the Britiſh Government, marked the period of the rebellion in 1641, the conſpiracy of 1798 was formed

formed and carried into effect, when Great Britain was involved in a war the moſt difficult, varied, and extenſive ſhe ever waged, and when the enemy ſhe had to combat was the moſt active, inſidious, and deadly; and that in co-operation and confederacy with that enemy, the Iriſh rebels laid their ſcheme of maſſacre and ruin.

From the extinction of the rebellion in 1641, by the force and perſeverance of Cromwell, we come to the period of the Revolution. The unconſtitutional acts and ſuperſtitious bigotry of the Houſe of Stuart had removed it from the throne of England; which removal, by the law of England, and an expreſs act of the Iriſh Legiſlature, equally applied to Ireland: but the ſuperſtition of James found adherents in the ignorance of the Iriſh, and all thoſe who wiſhed the ſeparation of the countries were united in his cauſe. The rivalry of the Catholic and Proteſtant was this time at its height; and as the former had predominated much in Ireland, and the Revolution eſtabliſhed the aſcendancy of the latter, religious as well as political conſiderations inſured the abdicated Monarch the ſupport of Ireland; and though loyalty and affection for the Houſe of Stuart may be ad-

vanced to juſtify the conduct of the Iriſh, and that attachment to the reigning family is highly meritorious; yet it is too plain, that it was the religion of James, and not his relation to the throne of England, which recommended him to Ireland. The Britiſh Legiſlature, on true and ſound conſtitutional principles, alone was competent to create and ſupply the vacancy of the throne; and by the expreſs proviſions of ſtatutes in both nations, the ſovereignty of Ireland neceſſarily and immediately followed that of Great Britain; and therefore, by adherence to the Houſe of Stuart, after the determination of the Engliſh Parliament, Ireland broke her conſtitutional engagements, and divided herſelf from the empire.

It is true, that the then chief governor of Ireland, Lord Tyrconnell, who was alſo at the head of the army, and a very conſiderable number of perſons in official ſtations under the Government, were in the intereſts of James, and bore arms in his ſupport; and that, however great and national the queſtion then at iſſue was, affection to a family long in poſſeſſion, and the violence to old prejudice in its ſudden expulſion, and ſubſti-

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tution of a foreigner, all amount, in a great degree, to excuſe and extenuate the conduct of Ireland in its reſiſtance to the new government, which appears from the conduct of King William himſelf, who carried on the war in Ireland not as with traitors and rebels, but as with fair and legitimate enemies; yet important inſtruction is conveyed to us by theſe tranſactions, which ſuggeſt the imperative neceſſity of now fixing the conſtitutional relation of the two countries in ſuch a way, that it ſhall ever be underſtood, and put beyond controverſy, that Ireland cannot in any caſe decide, or at all diſcuſs the queſtion of title to the common executive of theſe kingdoms; that her crown cannot be ſeparately conſidered, or abſtractedly become the ſubject of public argument; but that, to every poſſible purpoſe, there is a legal and conſtitutional merger of it in that of Great Britain. And it is manifeſt, that, as long as human affairs proceed in their natural progreſs, great occaſions may ariſe, in which the policy or liberties of Great Britain may require, that the rights of perſons claiming title to her crown, ſhould be modified, and even extinguiſhed; and, that as long as Ireland ſhall have a ſeparate

legiſlature, ſhe will have the means of diſcuſſion and determination of ſuch rights; ſhe will have no phyſical impediment to the exerciſe of her own free will; and as to her propriety in its exerciſe, that will depend on the views, public and individual, of the members of her legiſlature. Speculations of the probable nature of her public carriage in thoſe trials, will be conſiderably aided by reference to her hiſtory, and all her former conduct; and as the moſt aggravated evils peculiarly attend diſputes and conteſts for royal ſucceſſion; and that in Ireland there would be religious diſcord to add to their inveteracy; it neceſſarily reſults from enlarged and humane policy, that Ireland ſhould not, by the form of her government, be left expoſed to the intrigues of the royal claimant, who ſhould happen to be disfranchiſed and depoſed; and that a way ſhould not be left open which muſt lead to her own convulſion, and the diſtreſſes of the empire.

In the reign of William, the queſtion of the dependency of Ireland, and the authority of the Engliſh Parliament to interfere in her concerns, to the excluſion of her own legiſlature, was publicly agitated. In 1644, the

the power of binding Ireland by an Engliſh ſtatute was argued on legal grounds by Sir Richard Bolton, and ably anſwered by Sergeant Mayart: both arguments may be ſeen in Harris's Hibernica. The oppoſition which uniformly had been made in Ireland to the dominion of England, now openly queſtioned and denied the control of her legiſlature. Soon after the Revolution, ſeveral acts had paſſed in England, in which Ireland was expreſsly named and included. To obviate the effect of theſe ſtatutes, and eſtabliſh their incompetence to bind Ireland, her Parliament tranſmitted acts of their own, enacting and confirming the matter of the Britiſh ſtatutes; and in 1698 an ingenious writer publiſhed a ſubtle and popular refutation of the claims of England, in which he freely and openly contended for the freedom of the Iriſh Parliament. But, to my conception, a great part of the general doctrine and argument of Mr. Molyneux tends as ſtrongly to diſprove the authority of the Engliſh Crown, as of its Parliament, over Ireland; but whether his reaſoning was legitimate or not, was immaterial; it became the ſtandard of political orthodoxy in Ireland.

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The Engliſh Commons, however, were attentive to the public intereſt. There then exiſted no national difficulties or embarraſſment to extort from them conceſſions repugnant to the conſtitution of the empire. They addreſſed the throne on the pernicious aſſertions of this publication, and the dangerous tendency of the late conduct of the Iriſh Parliament; and aſſured the King of their determination to maintain and preſerve, in a parliamentary way, the dependence and ſubordination of Ireland to the imperial crown of the realm.

In the reign of Anne and George, the rival claims of the throne of England, and the prevalent Catholiciſm of Ireland, produced ſeveral acts of Parliament, certainly of a very penal nature, againſt perſons of the Romiſh communion. The Revolution was the era of Britiſh liberty; it undermined the antiquated and prieſtly notions of paſſive obedience and hereditary right, and uſhered into theſe kingdoms a ſober, ſalutary, rational, and uſeful freedom. The Catholic religion had connected itſelf with theſe political errors, and was the faith of the baniſhed Monarch and his adherents in both kingdoms.

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And hence in England aroſe the neceſſity of diſcouraging, by civil diſabilities, a profeſſion of men, whoſe doctrines were hoſtile to its new civil arrangement, and whoſe minds were attached to the fortunes of a family whoſe claims of power were incompatible with the political and religious liberty of England. But the popery laws in Ireland were marked with peculiar and inconceivable ſeverity. Not only the reaſons for thoſe acts of penalty which exiſted in England applied to Ireland; but there were others peculiar to herſelf, which ſharpened her reſentment, and produced a ſeries of ſtatutes by no means creditable to her legiſlative code. A very conſiderable change had taken place in the poſſeſſion of lands in Ireland, in conſequence of repealed forfeitures, and particularly the immenſe confiſcation which followed the triumph of the Houſe of Orange in 1688, when 1,060,000 plantation acres fell to the diſpoſal of the Crown; ſo that in Ireland the jealouſy of property was added to the virulence of her religious diſſenſion. Beſides, the great diſproportion of Catholic to Proteſtant made it alſo neceſſary to ſupply paucity of numbers by additional muniments from the Legiſlature; and indeed the

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meaſures of the Iriſh Parliament during this period went the whole extent that the moſt jealous proprietary or moſt bigotted fanatic could require for the ſecurity of their acquired lands, and the aſcendancy of the Proteſtant faith. We have lived, however, to ſee a complete ſeparation of divinity and politics, and the country of the Moſt Catholic King become the metropolis of irreligion and paganiſm: the triple crown has fallen, and by means of that very power, whoſe head once gloried in being eldeſt ſon of the church, the ſame nation whoſe enthuſiaſtic Chriſtianity once covered the Eaſt with her legions, now embraces the infidelity ſhe then perſecuted, and paganiſes the land ſhe went to reclaim. The Houſe of Stuart is no more; its misfortunes are nearer our recollection than its power. The rights of property in Ireland are confirmed by length of time, by preſcription, by alienation, and acquieſcence.

The proportion of numbers in Ireland between Catholic and Proteſtant is now much varied in favour of the latter: hence the penal laws have ſurvived the neceſſity which created them, and the reaſoning by

which they were juſtified. The danger to modern government ariſes, not from the theory of religioniſts, but from the enemies of all religion; and therefore the laws which neceſſity and prudence demand for the preſervation of Government, and the ſecurity of the Public, ſhould have a free and general operation; not applying to diſtinct deſcriptions of ſubjects, but making one diviſion only, that of the juſt and unjuſt; that all may be enjoined the great precept of religion and policy—Fear God, and honour the King.

In 1719 the Iriſh Houſe of Peers aſſerted a right of final judicature over all judgments and decrees given in courts within the kingdom, and committed to the cuſtody of their Black Rod the Barons of the Exchequer, who, in oppoſition to their order, enforced the decree of the Engliſh Peers in the caſe of Anneſley and Sherlock. This attempt produced the act of George the Firſt, which declares, that the Iriſh Lords have not the appellant juriſdiction, and again repeats the dependency of the Crown of Ireland, and the ſupremacy of the Britiſh Parliament.

In 1751 an unappropriated ſurplus remained in the Iriſh Treaſury, which the Duke of Dorſet, then Lord Lieutenant, conſented, in the King's name, to apply to the diſcharge of the national debt. The Iriſh Parliament forbore ſtating in the act which they tranſmitted, this previous conſent of the Crown: the clauſe, however, was introduced in England, and afterwards received in Ireland with much diſſatisfaction, as it was inſiſted there, that their own Parliament was competent to appropriate the reſiduum without the King's previous conſent, notwithſtanding that the King had an independent hereditary revenue in Ireland, and that the ſurplus in the Exchequer reſulted as well from the branches of that revenue as from any other parts of the public income; which is a power that the Parliament of England, under ſimilar circumſtances, could not claim againſt the Crown. And in 1753, on the recurrence of this queſtion, the amended act from England was rejected. However, the prerogative of the Crown was vindicated, and the money was iſſued at the Treaſury under the authority of a King's letter only.—Theſe diſtinct facts, at different periods in the hiſtory of Ireland, are enumerated to ſhow the

riſe and growth of a diſpoſition for weakening the connexion with Britain, and eſtabliſhing an independent government.

The circumſtances which follow, which have occurred in the preſent reign, admit of no equivocal conſtruction, and eſtabliſh important concluſions.

In 1778, during the diſſenſions of Great Britain with her American colonies, petitions and claims of rights were ſet on foot among the people of Ireland at that time, of a commercial nature only; theſe, however, grew in extent, and the public demand became louder, as difficulties abroad and diſcontents at home embarraſſed the King's government. This clamour had its effect; and what was called a free trade was conceded by the Britiſh Parliament.

Whenever the public mind is inflamed by the agitation of political queſtions, which are firſt advanced by a few of more ſagacity than virtue, whoſe private purſuits are maſked under the appearance of public intereſt, the conceſſion of the national requeſt will not allay the ferment, or extinguiſh the fire which conſumes the public peace. Ano-

ther grievance calls for redreſs, or ſome new privilege is ſuggeſted, more important than the former; and without which, it is ſaid, the ſtate cannot exiſt. Thus conceſſion leads to new demands, and the public appetite grows with what it devours.

The attainment of commercial advantages in extenſion of trade, and removal of reſtraints, was followed immediately by demands of a conſtitutional nature, which went to change the frame of government altogether. It was eaſily inſinuated that freedom of trade could be ſecured only by independence in the government: and the impoſing analogy was advanced, that as, with the individual, he will not be induſtrious unleſs the fruits of his labour be ſecured, ſo the capital of a nation will not expend itſelf in commerce or manufacture, unleſs it has the ſole power of its regulation. The tranſition therefore from the ſubject of trade to that of government was natural and eaſy; but as the latter goes more to the feelings of men over whom pride has more dominion than intereſt, a greater degree of union and earneſtneſs prevailed in Ireland upon this queſtion than on the former. The nation at

length

length became extremely agitated; armed aſſociations covered the land, whoſe origin was for the meritorious defence of their country againſt the common enemy.

The extent and multiplied demands of the war in which Britain was then engaged had much reduced the military eſtabliſhment in Ireland; and her coaſt having been more than once inſulted by the enemy, the Government could not but applaud the voluntary exertions of thoſe who came forward in the public ſervice. Nothing, however, can ſhow more the want of ſtrength, or the want of wiſdom of the Government at that time, in ſuffering a large military force to riſe in the country, totally independent of its authority. Long experience has ſhown, that the beſt inſtitutions of human wiſdom are ſubject to abuſe, and that good and evil are ſo intimately compounded, and ſo inſenſibly diſtributed in all the allotments of human life, that nothing can be ſaid to be abſolutely good which may not partake of evil; and no meaſure to be ſo convenient, from which miſchief may not reſult. Had the volunteers of Ireland adhered to their firſt principles, and

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kept in view the object of their aſſociation, their conduct would have been beyond all praiſe. Whenever the neceſſities of our country oblige us to aſſume a military character, it ſhould be well underſtood, and never for a moment forgotten, that the exerciſe of civil rights is ſuſpended; it is for their final preſervation that the ſoldier is created, who may be called the great executive of the ſtate, while it is the citizen who legiſlates; and as theſe two great powers of will and action, of command and performance, cannot combine in the ſtate without deſpotiſm, neither can they concentrate in the individual without producing anarchy. No principle of the Britiſh conſtitution can be ſo clearly proved, none is more ſuitable to its wiſdom, and certainly none, in its application, contributes more to the tranquillity, to the liberties, and to the happineſs of the ſtate.

The volunteers of Ireland, from ſoldiers became politicians, and formed a military convention, in perfect mimicry of the forms of Parliament, at the very moment when the lawful government was in the exerciſe of its functions. Such was the ſtate of public affairs;

affairs: the intended effect was produced, and the Britiſh Parliament renounced all dominion and authority within the kingdom of Ireland.

The continued practice of popular conventions, and of arbitrary, ſelf-formed aſſociations in Ireland, for diſcuſſing and reſolving on abſtract queſtions of government, for exploring defects and ſuggeſting innovations in the conſtitution, have been highly detrimental, and have palpably contributed to the origin, formation, and ſyſtematic progreſs of the late rebellion. When it is conſidered that theſe queſtions are in their nature the moſt difficult; that erroneous notions concerning them are moſt dangerous; that the bulk of ſociety is not competent, from learning, experience, or judgment, to treat of them; that the few who have capacity may want integrity and virtue; it is clear, that ſuch ſocieties are moſt likely to become pernicious inſtruments of ſedition and treaſon, inſtead of a medium for enlightening and improving the Public. And hence well-regulated ſtates have annexed conditions of age and property to the members of the legiſlature, that its deliberations may be directed by the wiſ-

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dom which reſults from years and educa-tion, and ſecured by the virtue which dwells with independence. The Convention Act of the preſent Chancellor in Ireland prevents all popular meetings by election and delega-tion. The licentiouſneſs of original ſocieties, however, has produced ſuch fatal conſe-quences, as particularly to demand the no-tice of Parliament.

As ſoon as the conſtitutional change of 1782 was effected, and Ireland declared an independent nation, new grievances were ſtated for redreſs, new evils were ſuggeſted for reform, complaints were made of ine-quality in the parliamentary repreſentation, and the preponderance of Engliſh influence. The convention called for procuring the par-liamentary reform, openly, and in the moſt unqualified manner, diſcuſſed the plan of innovation; and to raiſe the political im-portance of this extraordinary aſſembly, it had its ſittings in the very metropolis, at-tended by a conſiderable guard of volun-teers. The Government at length ſaw its danger, it remained firm, and the project of correcting and new-modelling the parlia-mentary repreſentation has hitherto failed.

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The friends of democracy, and thoſe who wiſhed to eſtabliſh a ſeparate government in Ireland, finding that their own power was inſufficient to attain their purpoſes, and knowing that the great majority of the people of Ireland, being Catholics, and excluded from the exerciſe of the elective franchiſe, were in a great meaſure indifferent to the conſtitutional changes which were demanded; they therefore applied themſelves to the ſeduction of the Catholics, and, ſuſpending the open purſuit of reform and ſeparation from England, applied their whole force to procure a repeal of the penal laws, and the admiſſion of the Catholic body to the full participation of the conſtitution. The very men who were ſecretly undermining the Government, and had reſolved on its complete ſubverſion, were obliged, in furtherance of their deſigns, to declaim publicly on its excellence, and the injuſtice of any portion of the King's ſubjects being excluded from the full enjoyment of ſo admirable a conſtitution. The former method of ſpeaking to Government, through the medium of conventions and national delegations, was again reſorted to, and again ſucceeded. However, before

the Catholic convention thought proper to diſſolve itſelf, it voted the reſolution for reform; thus requiting the ſervices of their new friends by reciprocal obligation, and concurring in hoſtility to the conſtitution, into which they had been admitted.

In the year 1785, certain commercial regulations reſpecting the trade of the two countries occupied the attention of their reſpective legiſlatures. The propoſitions offered by England have been univerſally admitted as highly promoting the intereſts of Ireland. However, Great Britain conſidered it eſſential to the harmony of this adjuſtment, and for the future ſatisfaction of both countries, that the regulations of one ſhould prevail in the other; that the trade and manufactures of Great Britain and Ireland ſhould enjoy the ſame freedom, and feel the ſame reſtraint. On this expreſs condition was it propoſed, that thoſe laws which have created and expanded the commercial power of England, ſhould be adopted occaſionally in Ireland, in ſimilar caſes only, and enlarging and reſtraining equally in both. As this ſyſtem manifeſtly appeared calculated to cement the intereſts of the two countries, to aſſimilate their

their commercial ſyſtem, to exclude the jealouſies of trade, and fully and deeply to blend the capital, the induſtry, and talents of both, the friends of diſunion were alarmed; they perceived that this meaſure would produce the union which they deprecated, that it would bind what they meant to untie: every oppoſition, therefore, to the meaſure was to be given. They repreſented the conſtitution of 1782 to be in danger; the people were told that their liberty and happineſs could not ſurvive the ratification of this agreement. Every art which could delude a credulous, unſuſpecting, uninveſtigating nation, was practiſed, and with ſucceſs; every topic of pride and ſelf-importance was urged to a people, whoſe paſſions, and weakneſs, and propenſities have ever been the triumph of its enemies. The commercial detail of the propoſitions was not examined; it was loſt in their conſtitutional effect. The cry of condemnation became general, and the meaſure failed.

Since the commencement of the preſent war, England has experienced all the difficulties which are incident to the ſtate of hoſtility, and which required the utmoſt vigilance

and exertion of her Government. The common enemy has been unwearied in his aggreſſions, and ſingularly active and copious in his reſources. He has proſecuted the war by internal treachery, and ſubdues nations by detaching ſubjects from their government. Among the numerous objects which his principles have deluded, and his ſtratagems beguiled, Ireland is moſt conſpicuous and unfortunate. The enemy ſaw that, through her, the power of Britain might receive an irrecoverable blow, and that ſhe had not only much to reward, but to ſolicit his attention. Her peculiar government had generated much abuſe, which her imperfect connexion with England had rather promoted than corrected. Great inequality of civil rights had divided her people; and a diſpoſition of hoſtility towards Great Britain, and for the ſeparation of the countries, had progreſſively advanced. The enemy has fully availed himſelf of the ſtate of Ireland; and beſides the activity of his enmity towards Great Britain in every way in which ſhe was vulnerable, his interference has been courted and invited by the diſaffected in Ireland. To refer to the particulars of the correſpondence between the French Government and the Societies of United Iriſhmen is unneceſſary.

The

The Report of the Committees of both Houſes laſt ſeſſions is full and ſatisfactory in its developement, not only of the rebellion itſelf, but of all the preceding ſteps and machinations which led to the unhappy conſequences, and prepared and organized the nation for open violence. This Report contains a demonſtration as clear as the mind of man can expect on any ſubject, that to ſeparate theſe countries was the ſole ruling object of the United Societies; that all their demands of reform and of juſtice to the Catholic, were colourable only; they were pretences to deceive the unthinking, to bribe the intereſted, and to force Government to conceſſions, which by gradual encroachment would undermine its whole ſyſtem. The founder of the Society of United Iriſhmen in Dublin, the miſery of whoſe laſt days ſhould convey ſome morality to the wicked, made it the baſis and the firſt principle of the Iriſh Union, that connexion with Britain was ruinous to Ireland. It is this paramount object only which gives conſiſtency and uniformity of character to all the meaſures and proceedings of that execrable Society; and this ſame principle, Tone maintained on his trial, and ſealed with his death: and one of the ſelf-convicted traitors, now in cuſtody, had the confi-

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dence to make the ſame profeſſion at the bar of Parliament, and to enter particularly into argument that Ireland could exiſt as an independent nation unconnected with Great Britain. And it does appear by the ſame parliamentary Report that it was determined ſolemnly by the Union not to be diverted from their great purpoſe by any conceſſion of Parliament, or any acquieſcence to their demands.

After the review which has been taken of the hiſtory of Ireland, and the particular facts which have been adduced, the ſupplement of evidence which is furniſhed by the late rebellion, eſtabliſhes, beyond all doubt, that a great degree of reſtleſſneſs and diſquiet has long prevailed in Ireland; that her lower claſſes of people have been uniformly turbulent and untractable, qualities which indiſpoſed them to the dominion of England, from the peaceful habits and ſubordination it would produce; that religious difference and the jealouſies of property forfeited by rebellion, and transferred to Engliſh ſettlers, have promoted and inflamed their prejudices; and that they are ignorant, perfidious, and credulous. It appears alſo, that the American war, and the revolution in France, have produced a ſtrong diſpoſition for change, and for new-modelling eſtabliſhed governments;

that

that this ſpirit has had extenſive influence in Ireland; that the American war ſeparated Ireland from the Engliſh Legiſlature; that the conduct of the Iriſh Parliament in 1789 endangered the only connexion which remained, that of the executive; and that in the preſent war the dependency of Ireland on the Engliſh Crown has been preſerved by force of arms only.

A ſeries of continued efforts anticipated the conſtitutional change of 1782. From the time of the Revolution attempts had been made to eſtabliſh a ſeparate legiſlature, and the embarraſſment of Britain in the American war produced its accompliſhment. The King's malady and ſuſpenſion of the royal power produced the extraordinary deciſion in 1789; and the conſpiracy and rebellion in 1798 were preceded by the reception of French principles, the new enthuſiaſm of democracy, and by reiterated complaints againſt the ſyſtem of corrupt influence, which after the ſeparation of the legiſlatures remained the only poſſible mode of keeping the countries together; and this conſpiracy and rebellion took effect when Britain was involved in a war, the unprecedented nature of which required that ſhe ſhould direct her whole attention,

tention, and pour out her whole ſtrength, againſt the efforts of the common enemy.

Every man therefore who regards the Britiſh empire is called upon to conſider with ſeriouſneſs and attention the preſent ſtate of Ireland. That there exiſts within that country a conſiderable body of men ſtrongly diſpoſed to effect a diſmemberment of the empire, is beyond ſcepticiſm to deny; and that this diſpoſition is artfully concealed under public profeſſions of attachment to the conſtitution of England, and of claims for its full participation by reforming the Parliamentary repreſentation, and giving the people more efficacy, is equally clear and indiſputable. And it cannot be denied that the vices of the Iriſh government, its ariſtocracy, and enlarged and unqualified corruption, are ſufficient to give colouring to popular complaints, and to alienate the people from a connexion with England, which ſeems to require ſuch odious and miſchievous ſupports. Theſe vices can be no longer tolerated. A government which deſpiſes public opinion cannot long exiſt. The public authorities ſhould be reſpected, and the people ſhould have confidence in the legiſlature. When abuſes are carried to an extent which no one attempts to juſtify,

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which all are ready to condemn, and which provoke ſome to acts of rebellion, the public ſafety is endangered, and this danger is much heightened by the extraordinary occurrences of theſe days, in which the fall of an ancient and venerable monarchy has ſhaken the ſtates of Europe to their foundation, and in which an inſolent and preſumptuous democracy affects univerſal dominion by her principles as well as arms. Ireland has confederated, and Britain is at war with this democracy. If it ſtood therefore on the mere footing of policy and of ſelf-intereſt with Great Britain, it is impoſſible for her any longer to ſleep over the affairs of Ireland; ſhe cannot abandon her to the enemy; ſhe cannot conſent to her own diſmemberment and diſgrace. But claims of a higher nature and views, ſuch as become Great Britain, call for her immediate interference. The late rebellion has rekindled the heat of religious bigotry, and revived the animoſities of party. Theſe diviſions in Ireland are marked with uncommon virulence, and accompanied with peculiar atrocities. To repreſs their violence and extend the King's protection to all his Iriſh ſubjects, is now a difficult exertion of his government; but the very moment in which the preſent vigilance is intermitted,

mitted, or that any change of government is conceded, which ſhall leſſen the King's influence in Ireland, and augment the popular power, at that inſtant the torch of civil fury will again light that unhappy country to new ſcenes of murder and deſolation. The United Iriſhmen and the whole claſs of the diſaffected are now directing their whole attention to force a Parliamentary Reform. In this purſuit they are joined by many men of good intentions, who lament the preſent faults in the mode of adminiſtering the government of Ireland, but who have not examined the origin of theſe faults, nor the neceſſity which has produced and continues them, and who are equally unconſcious and unſuſpecting of the conſequences which would infallibly reſult from the attainment of ſuch a meaſure. A democratic Houſe of Commons in Ireland, and connexion with England, cannot exiſt together; they are incompatible. England would ſoon be driven to the deplorable neceſſity of maintaining her dominion by direct and continued war, or abandoning Ireland to the extravagance of popular aſcendancy, and the deſigns of the common enemy. That an independent Houſe of Commons would eſtabliſh a republic in Ireland is as certain as any event can be.

which

which is future, and which the mind of man can foreſee and anticipate, reaſoning from what has happened, to what may happen, from the certainty of paſt experience to the probable dependency of like effects on like cauſes in the the great ſeries of human action, and feeling at the very moment of this deduction that it ſhares in that great progreſſion which ſilently, though rapidly, is accelerating the conſequences it predicted.

It is not in vain that the providence of God, in ſome inſtances, imparts to man a portion of his intellect, to penetrate into the future, and foreſee the revolutions of time. Human nature is ſeldom viſited by misfortune without deſerving it, and knowing that it proceeds from its own omiſſion or offence; and never does God ſpread before his creatures the pit of deluſion and fate, without giving them faculty to ſee and to avoid it.

The moment has therefore come, in which the Government of Great Britain is urged by its own intereſt, by its parental duty towards Ireland, by the irreſiſtible claims of that great portion of the Iriſh people who iſſued from her loins, who ſhare her religious faith, and

whoſe property reſts on Engliſh title; and, above all, by the characteriſtics of the Engliſh nation, her order, humanity and religion, to ſave Ireland, without delay, from the evils which impend, and the deſtruction to which ſhe is expoſed. Whatever difficulties may impede an immediate incorporation, whatever inconvenience may attend the preſent agitation of this meaſure, they are as nothing to the embarraſſment which will accrue, and the direful neceſſity in which ſhe will be involved, if the preſent occaſion be neglected, and the ſchemes of the diſaffected prevail. Her magnanimity will encounter danger if it exiſt; there will be none if ſhe is firm; ſhe will regard as idle ſound the clamour which is raiſed by the ſtupid politics of ſome, and the wickedneſs of others; and, true to the great character of her nation, ſhe will conduct herſelf with wiſdom, philanthropy, and juſtice.

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